Crime Against Women

1000. PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the crime against women in general and dowry related crimes in particular are on the increase; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) As per the data compiled by the National Crimes Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, a total of 135771 incidents of crimes against women were reported in 1999, 137472 in the year 2000 and 124869 in 2001 (upto available months), as per details at statement (*See* below). The total incidents of crime against women went up by 1.25% in the year 2000 over 1999 whereas dowry death cases rose by 3.92% during the same period. On the other hand, cases under Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 decreased by 38.3% in the same period. The figures for the year 2001 are incomplete, hence non-comparable.

(b) To prohibit giving or taking of dowry, Government has enacted the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961. Sections 304B and 498A of the Indian Penal Code also deal with 'dowry death' and the offence of cruelty, both mental and physical, towards a married woman by her husband or relatives. Section 113-B of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 provides that Courts may presume the guilt of the husband or relative who had subjected the woman to cruelty in connection with dowry.

The direct responsibility for implementing these laws is that of State Governments and the mechanisms under them. The Government has, however, advised all State Governments to appoint Dowry Prohibition Officers with independent charge and to notify rules under the provisions of the Dowry Prohibition Act.

The National Commission for Women is in the process of reviewing the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 to make its provisons more stringent and effective.

Since the menace of dowry is a reflection of women's low status in

society, Government have taken a number of steps to raise the status of women and to change societal attitudes towards girls and women. These include media campaigns, awareness generation camps, spreading legal literacy, counselling, legal aid, support to voluntary agencies and schemes for the socio-economic empowerment of women.

The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women adopted by the Government is also committed to eliminating the incidence of all forms of violence against women, including those arising from customs such as dowry.

Statement

Indicence of crime committed against women from 1999 to 2001 (upto available months)

Sl. No.	Crime head	Year		
		1999	2000	2001*
1.	Rape	15468	15427	13541
2.	Kidnapping & abduction	15962	16004	13036
3.	Dowry Death	6699	6962	5792
4.	Cruelty by husband and relatives	43823	40611	40618
5.	Molestation	32311	31581	27963
6.	Sexual harassment	8858	14034	12898
7.	Importation of girls	1	137	162
8.	Sati Prevention Act	0	1	4
9.	Immoral Traffic (P) Act	9363	8248	6932
10.	Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986	222	2576	2531
11.	Dowry Prohibition Act	3064	1891	1392
	TOTAL:	135771	137472	124869